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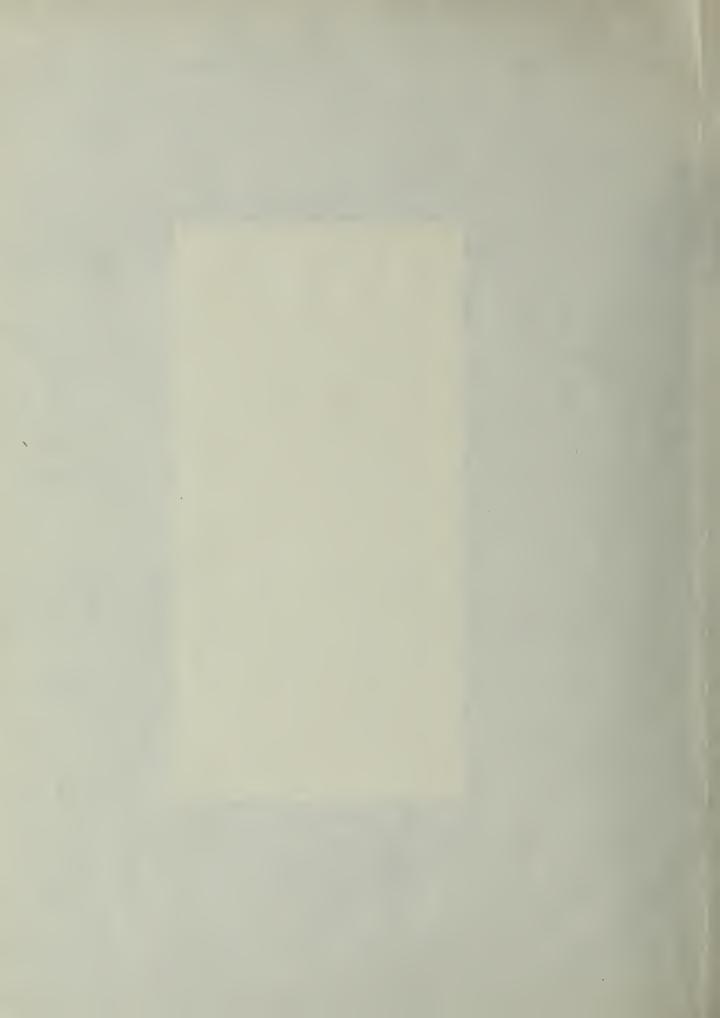
University of Illinois (Urbana Champaign) -- Library

General Principles proposed for staff management



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University of Illinois Library





TO MEMBERS OF THE LIBRARY STAFF:

I should like to add a word or two to what is said in the letter from the Committee on Staff and Civil Service.

The first plans for improving Civil Service arrangements were laid at a dinner meeting of Heads of Departments in the early fall of 1940. Ever since that early beginning, an effort has been made to use staff assistance in dealing with what is a large and many-sided problem. One of the most tangible expressions of this desire to stay in close touch with the staff perhaps is to be found in the make-up of the Committee on Staff and Civil Service itself. It was selected with a view to bringing to bear on the problem a variety of points of view—the views of those who are heads of departments and those who are not, of those who have given special study to personnel matters, and those who have had long years of experience with these same matters. The Committee has worked hard and has already produced some good results. It now turns to the members of the staff as a whole with a report and a statement of principles.

If you have any suggestions, I hope you will pass them along to the Committee. This is a subject which is of interest to all of us.

Director

Carl m. White

Urbana, Illinois December 24, 1941

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MEMBERS OF THE LIBRARY STAFF:

Nearly a year ago, Director White appointed a Committee on Library Staff and Civil Service whose duty, among other things, it has been "to evolve a program for staff appointment and staff management carefully suited to the needs of this Library in this University and, in doing so, to utilize the most enlightened experience in other fields and other libraries."

In working towards this goal, the Committee prepared the attached statement of principles which might serve as a basis for creating a more satisfactory system of staff management. Since the chief aim of a good plan of staff management is to secure and maintain the kind of staff which can discharge effectively the duties assigned to it, this statement of principles is intended to accomplish this aim, that is, to secure for the Library the best persons available for the salaries offered and to keep these persons on the staff so long as they give satisfactory service.

The statement is tentative and is submitted to the Library staff for purposes of discussion and criticism. The Committee will welcome an expression of views and suggestions for improving the statement.

For the information of the Library staff, there is also attached hereto a statement presenting the views of the Committee regarding the status of the professional members of the Library staff with respect to the Civil Service. As you probably know, the recent amendment to the State Civil Service Act permits exemption from the provisions of the Act in the case of professional positions. The purpose of the attached statement is to define the term "professional" and to present reasons for removing the professional staff from the control of the civil service. Comments on this statement are also invited.

Frank J. Bertalan
Lyle S. Bamber
Mary Lois Bull
Fanny Dunlap
Josie B. Houchens
Lucy V. Kepler
E. W. McDiarmid
Arnold H. Trotier, Chairman

Urbana, Illinois December 24, 1941

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY

General Principles Proposed for Staff Management

The following tentative statement of principles is made for purposes of discussion and criticism.

- 1. Organization: Within the Library, the authority for personnel management should belong to the Director, subject to approval by the President.
- 2. Classification of Positions: Library positions should be classified in accordance with the duties performed and the qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of these duties.
- 3. Terminology: Professional library positions should be designated by a terminology recognizing the professional and technical nature of the duties performed in order to distinguish them from administrative, clerical and stenographic positions.
- 4. Faculty Ranking: Professional staff members should be given faculty ranking commensurate with the duties performed and the qualifications required.
- 5. Pay Plan: Salary schedules should be established in accordance with the duties and responsibilities of the positions and salary advancement should be based primarily on demonstrated efficiency in the position.
- 6. Selection: Provision should be made to secure the best qualified candidates for positions and, to this end, there should be no geographic restrictions.
- 7. Appointment: The Director should have the responsibility of selecting the person who meets best the qualifications for appointment to a position, subject to approval by the President. Final appointment should be made upon his recommendation based upon evidence of satisfactory performance during a trial period. Adequate provision should be made for temporary and emergency appointments.
- 8. Transfers: Provision should be made for the transfer of a staff member from one position to another within the library.
- 9. Tenure, promotion, demotion: After the expiration of a probationary period, staff members should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their services should be terminated, or demotions made, only for adequate cause; promotions should be made on the basis of meritorious service.
- 10. Staff Training, etc.: Suitable provision should be made for in-service training, staff lectures, conferences, committees, enrolling in university courses, exchange of positions, and for leaves of absence for advanced study.
- 11. Working Conditions: Suitable provisions should be made for the welfare of staff members with respect to leaves (sickness, critical illness or death in family, maternity leave, etc.), vacations, working hours, attendance at professional meetings, etc.

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12. Retirement, etc.: Adequate provisions should be made for retirement, disability and death benefits.

Urbana, Illinois December 24, 1941 et and the second second to the second secon

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My dear Dr. White:

Your Committee on Staff and Civil Service is still at work on its original assignment, namely, the outlining of a forward-looking program of personnel administration of the Library staff. The following is a special report, made as the result of your request late in the summer for a considered judgment as to where the line should be drawn between professional and other members of the Library staff.

This is a very vital matter to this Library staff and one which has been of deep concern to us for many years. It should now receive the most earnest consideration, for the passage of the new Civil Service bill last summer has opened the way for a more enlightened classification of the Library staff than seemed possible under the old law. The amendment to Section 11 provides:

"(16) The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and its employees shall not be subject to the provisions of this act. The Board shall as soon as possible and within six months after this amendment goes into effect, and as often thereafter as may be necessary because of new positions, classify by rules adopted for that purpose all non-academic positions and employments in the University of Illinois except the President of the University, the officers of the Board, administrative officers, and professional and scientific positions, with reference to the duties thereof for the purpose of establishing grades, salary scales, and standards of examinations therefor. Such positions and employments shall constitute the classified civil service of the University and no appointments shall be made except in accordance with the provisions of such rules..."

It is the understanding of this Committee that the insertion of the words "professional positions" was made with certain types of library positions in mind. At the time of the conferences which resulted in this insertion, the number of positions on the library staff that can properly be regarded as "professional" was not agreed on. It was agreed, however, by all that there are positions on the library staff that are not professional just as it was agreed by all that there are others which are professional. The purpose of this report then is to indicate where the line is to be drawn between the class of positions which are professional and which, therefore, ought to be excluded from our Civil Service and the class which are not professional and which, therefore should be left under Civil Service.

It is the considered opinion of this Committee:

(1) That all positions in the Library, the professional duties of which require that they should be filled by graduates of Library Schools or by others with academic training equivalent to that required for the scientific

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staff in the University, shall be exempted from Civil Service and receive the academic status which their salaries and their duties justify;

(2) That all positions in the Library which it is agreed are comparable as to type of clerical work and salary range, to similar clerical positions in other departments on the campus, shall not be exempted but shall be under the direction of the University Civil Service.

The major part of the Library staff is a professional staff engaged in educational work of great importance to the University and this revision offers the long-awaited opportunity for our staff to take its place along with the other educational and scientific staffs, and that it should no longer suffer from the heavy handicaps under which it has operated since 1911, due to the limitations of Civil Service.

I. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

We wish to call attention to the educational qualifications which have been considered as necessary for the present Library staff as evidence of their right to a classification with the educational and professional group.

Every member of the staff whom we would wish to classify as professional is a graduate of a Library School and holds a Bachelor's degree in Library Science, requiring one year's professional training in addition to college graduation. Over 50% of the staff have from two to four years of professional training.

43 staff members have an A. B. or B. S. and a Bachelor of Library Science. This represents one year of professional training beyond college graduation. Most of these assistants are working toward a Master's degree.

31 staff members have an A. B. or B. S., a B. S. in Library Science, an M. A. or M. S. in Library Science. This represents two years' professional training beyond college graduation.

6 staff members have an A. B. or B. S. and the old B. L. S. degree which also represents two years of professional training beyond college graduation.

3 staff members have an A. B., a B. L. S., and a Master's degree in a subject field. This represents three years' training beyond college graduation.

4 staff members have an A. B., a B. S. in L. S., a Master's degree in Library Science, plus a Master's degree in a subject field. This represents three years of training beyond college graduation.

3 staff members have an A. B. plus degrees from Law Schools, two holding the degree of LL.B., and one the degree of D.J. in addition to the Bachelor of Library Science. This represents a number of years of training in highly specialized fields.

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3 staff members have Ph. D. degrees in their own subject fields such as Classics, English, Philosophy, as well as the B. S. in Library Science. Several others are well advanced in their work towards a Ph. D. degree.

This shows that not a member of the staff which we regard as professional has less than five years of academic preparation, while many have had six and some seven and even eight years.

The library staff numbers among its members individuals who have also been on the teaching staffs of other colleges and universities.

The Library Schools from which the staff have received their degrees are organized on a graduate basis. Their methods of selection aim at the admission of college graduates of superior scholarship and specific ability as prospective librarians. These schools are classified with the professional schools of Law and Medicine in universities such as Illinois, California, Columbia, and Michigan, but whereas the professional curriculum of most universities is based on two to three years of undergraduate study, the schools of Librarianship from which we have drawn our staff require four years of undergraduate study, a familiarity with several foreign languages, and a final average of not less than B for admission, thus providing a background of more liberal education than some other professions. The first year of Library School training leads to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Library Science, the second year leads to the Master's degree. Many students on admission to Library Schools already have advanced degrees in chosen subject fields.

There are at present 94 full time positions in Urbana and 5 in the Chicago colleges which we regard as professional. There are also 11 part-time positions which are professional in character and occupied by graduate assistants which would, for that reason, automatically be exempted from Civil Service. The salary ranges from this full time group which we regard as professional are as follows:

41 receive \$1,400 to \$1,700 39 receive 1,800 to 2,400 9 receive 2,500 to 3,000

8 receive 3,100 to 4,000 plus

The 11 part time positions are on the \$1,400 basis, or \$700 for half-time. It is the understanding of this Committee that plans have been discussed to raise this base of \$1,400 as soon as possible to \$1,500. It would then conform to the beginning scale for professional positions in other large University libraries such as California and Columbia.

The above analysis and the experience of the Library administration shows that:

(1) Educational requirements are as high as for many scientific and educational staffs on the campus;

(2) Candidates with the required qualifications are not easily obtained;

(3) The work is entitled to be recognized as of a highly professional character:

(4) The salary scale falls naturally into the academic grouping of assistant, instructor, associate, and professor.

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II. PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER

The presence of a professional Library School under the same direction as the library makes it especially important that the younger group of assistants, having the degree of Bachelor in Library Science, should be placed on a professional basis because of the opportunity this affords young librarians to receive training and experience comparable to that received by assistants in the academic departments, each group of assistants having had five years of academic education.

We consider that <u>Professional</u> is the most fitting characterization of that part of the Library staff represented by the positions involved. Librarians have sought and gained through their professional organizations widespread recognition because of the essentially intellectual and educational character of their work especially in university libraries.

Educational institutions are building up large research collections often of a special nature to supplement classroom instruction, laboratory investigation and to provide necessary materials for research of all kinds. So great has become the mass of published material that librarians have become, to a large extent, responsible for the selection of this material. A thorough knowledge of bibliographic guides and reference tools is required as a background to select and organize these collections, to make them available and to promote their use.

Librarianship involves large individual responsibility. Each individual renders service in direct relation to the thoroughness of his preparation, the initiative, resourcefulness and understanding which he brings to each individual problem, and the judgment he exercises in referring the reader at times to a person equipped to give more specialized advice.

III. ACADEMIC CHARACTER

We consider that the phases of library work which require training are not only professional but also academic. The trend in college and university education has for some time been away from the lecture and textbook methods to an emphasis on the use of library materials. The librarian's task is to make the resources of the library available to faculty and students; therefore, the work of the university library staff with academic and professional training complements that of the teaching faculty by integrating the library with other instructional activities.

The University library serves undergraduates, graduate students, students in professional schools, faculty engaged in teaching and research, lement of and visiting scholars. The nature of the persons served and the type of materials needed have made necessary "scientific methods in making available and distributing library materials" to students and scholars and has given librarians an important part in the instructional and research program of the institution. The librarian must be able to assist even in highly specialized fields.

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL FUNCTION

Many members of research and scientific staffs in other departments of the University do no classroom teaching but do work auxiliary to teaching and research. The library staff has the same auxiliary function. In many cases it partakes more of the nature of individual instruction than that of

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the scientific staff for the librarians meet the students on a plane of informal and intimacy impossible in a classroom. That educators have recognized the instructional function of the librarian is evidenced by the following quotation from President Wriston of Brown University:

"Without underestimating his administrative responsibility the instructional tasks of the librarian are even more important. The instruction for which he is responsible is of the kind most vital to the development of the student and his advancement along the road toward real education. librarian, as teacher, stimulates, the student to work for himself. He is largely independent of the machinery of courses, credits, hours, and points. His function is to facilitate the student's search for knowledge for its own sake, for its intrinsic values, and he should implement all the student's intellectual ambitions, bringing thus to realization the significant aims of education. Looked at from this point of view, the librarian is not merely a service officer without any independent intellectual function of significance, but one with definite and positive duties in the field of instruction. His teaching consists not only in making accessible what professors prescribe, but in encouraging the student to go far beyond any prescription save his own ambitious curiosity.

"It is precisely through independent reading that the task of knitting together the raveled sleeve of information may best be achieved. Here the student's own philosophical structure takes form as a result of reading and reflection. A shrewd and wise person, who knows the student and has the gift for offering stimulating suggestions, makes as direct and profound an impact upon his development as any professor, of whatever degree of distinction.

"The students are not the only group within the institution which should exhibit constant development. The faculty itself must be ever alert constantly to expand its own intellectual horizons. The task of the librarian in this respect is enormously important. He should be an active and effective agent in the continuous education of the teaching staff."

The importance of the role of the library as an instrument of education and research is now so widely recognized that, given the opportunity, any failure on the part of the University to recognize it as such is to continue an outmoded conception of education.

V. UNIVERSITY RECOGNITION

The professional and educational character of the library profession has been recognized in other large Universities and this is an opportunity for the University of Illinois to encourage such recognition. The obligation to do this is all the greater in view of the fact that the University sponsors a Library School, one of the two oldest and most important professional schools in the country. The Director, the Library School faculty, and the Library staff have been placed in an embarrassing position to explain to the students who are being

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prepared for professional service why the staff of the University Library has for so many years been classed with the non-academic group.

The Library Staff occupied its proper position in the University group until 1911 when the University was drawn under the State Givil Service. This shows that the non-professional classification afterwards employed was not the original plan of the University for its Library Staff, but was imposed on the administration by an outside agency. (Professor Nevins in his history of the University of Illinois says, "In 1911 all permanent University employees outside the instructional and scientific staffs were unfortunately brought under the Civil Service Code.")

Now that the restrictions of the old state law have been removed, it will be an insufferable blow to the prestige of the Library staff and Library School if the University does not accord the proper professional recognition to those positions for which its own training is a prerequisite.

The way for such recognition is already incorporated in our own University statutes (approved March 10, 1936) as follows:

The Library.

- 19. (b) The Library shall be in charge of the Director of the Library, who shall be responsible for its arrangement and care and for the organization of the Library staff.
- (d) Members of the Library staff shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the Director of the Library as approved by the President, and may be given appropriate academic rank."

The University has at times recognized the professional character of the Library staff by granting several months leaves of absence with pay to staff members for study and travel. It has also granted leaves of absence for summer teaching in other Universities where the individual assumed faculty rank.

We also wish to cite the stand taken on the status of the Library staff by some other universities; for lack of space we shall only mention a few of comparable importance.

California University:

"A grouping of the Library staff into professional and clerical assistants was put into effect at the University of California. The minimum requirements for the junior assistant, the lowest grade in the professional group, was a university degree and library school training. All others were called clerical assistants and were not considered candidates for promotion to the professional roll. As a result of this reclassification, all those in the professional group have been placed on the same salary basis as the corresponding grades in the instructional staff. The librarian receives the salary of a full professor, the associate librarian that of an associate professor, heads of departments that of assistant professor, senior assistants that of instructor, and junior assistants that of assistant."

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Columbia University Statues:

"Members of the Library staff shall be classified as professional and non-professional and assigned to appropriate grades of service within each group. Permanent members of the professional staff will rank with offices of instruction or officers of administration in respect to academic privileges."

Stanford University manual of faculty organization:

"That members of the Library staff be given classification and such status on the Academic staff as their salaries may justify." This includes Sabbatical leave for heads of departments.

College of the City of New York has established the professional positions in its library as outside of Civil Service and as part of the faculty.

Wisconsin University:

The heads of departments have the rank of assistant professor. (From a letter of the Director of Libraries.)

Kansas State College has for a long time classified its staff with the faculty and granted Sabbatical leave.

"Yale University has a number of its staff with the rank of full professor, assistant professor, and instructor." Keogh.

We know of only two other university libraries which are operating under the Civil Service plan and in each case librarians and staff have found it a handicap to effective staff management and to appropriate recognition of the professional character of library service. Even in California where a state Civil Service is highly developed, the State University is exempted.

VI. CIVIL SERVICE SITUATION ANALYZED

The University, by taking an active part in the changes made in the state law, has recognized the fact that Civil Service has been unsatisfactory even for the appointment of the clerical staff. In the revision of the system, we feel the University should recognize the additional burden and disadvantage of its application to any professional group and remove from its restrictions any positions adjudged by the Library administration to be professional, leaving under Civil Service only those clerical positions which are comparable to other clerical positions on the campus.

A. Clerical Staff.

It is the opinion of the Committee that the classification of certain positions in the library as clerical is justified under the law and that the continuance of these positions under the University Civil Service is desirable solely because these positions are comparable to many in other departments which are on Civil Service.

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- (1) Educational requirements the same as for many other stenographic, typing, and clerical workers on the campus; there are, however, some clerical positions calling for higher than average educational qualifications.
- (2) No special complications about securing candidates such as exist in securing professionally trained librarians.
- (3) Transfers easily effected with other departments because of similarity of work.
- (4) Range of salary fits into general University clerical scale.

There are at present 20 full time stenographic or clerical positions in the Urbana library and 3 in the Chicago libraries. There are also a few part-time clerical workers.

B. Professional Staff

The Committee on Staff and Civil Service which was appointed a year ago because of the dissatisfaction of the administrative heads of the Library with Civil Service, spent most of last year studying the situation in the library and confirmed their opinion that the position of a professional staff on Civil Service was unendurable in a University library, because:

- (1) There was and will be under any Civil Service scheme a lack of freedom and flexibility in the selection and appointment of professionally trained people to the positions.
- (2) Many of the positions required not only library training but special subject knowledge in so many fields; i.e., Chemistry, Natural Sciences, Law, Agriculture, Engineering, Education, Art, Medicine, Modern Languages, Classical Languages, Social Sciences, Political Science, History, Journalism, etc., and each position required, in addition, certain personal qualifications of high order.
- (3) It was impossible without permission of the Civil Service authority to look over the field in other parts of the country and offer a position to some well-trained and experienced person with unusual educational and professional qualifications. The requirement of residence in the state was a great cause of inbreeding and will always be a factor in any Civil Service.
- (4) The choice of a person to fill a particular position in the library must be made from the top of an eligible list, and this might result in the appointment of a person superior to others on the list, but actually unsuited to the position and less desirable than another person who could be obtained for the same salary.
- (5) The mechanical processes such as probationary periods, examinations, and the subsequent delay in grading and certification not only slowed up the process of selection and

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appointment but actually kept the best qualified people from applying.

- (6) The best Library School graduates do not seek positions, but are placed by the appointment services in their schools.
- (7) The Civil Service appointee often has much less professional interest and enthusiasm and often less ambition than one who has been selected because of these very qualities which are so necessary in building up an efficient professional staff.

The Committee also spent much time making a study of Civil Service practices as they affected other professions than our own and concluded that no scheme of Civil Service could be made to fit satisfactorily a professional group which was part of the educational life of a great university. They also studied the classification and status of the Library staffs in other large university libraries and the classifications drawn up for the use of such libraries by our professional library associations.

After such study an analysis was made of each position in the library to ascertain the duties of each as well as the educational and personal qualifications necessary for each position.

The Committee then drew up a tentative group of principles for a plan of personnel management for the University of Illinois Library which they felt would more nearly fit the needs of a professional staff.

We are convinced that it will be impossible to select and maintain a professional library staff with the proper qualifications unless the authority for such selection and management be left in the hands of the Director and his colleagues. Suppose, for instance, the faculty of any college such as Commerce or Law were chosen by Civil Service methods and the Dean left to assume the responsibility of making the best he could of the faculty appointed in this way.

The following quotation from the U. S. National Resources Committee report on Research would seem to indicate that in the case of a large research library such as the University of Illinois that great dependence for its usefulness must be placed on the staff and the University has certain responsibilities to the faculty to see that the best staff possible is maintained.

"It is clearly evident that the majority of college and university presidents and boards of trustees have no adequate conception of what a library should be in books, periodicals, and service in a modern educational institution. It is the heart of its scholarly life and no institution of distinguished scholarship can be built around a poor library. A poor library never attracts distinguished scholars. Many faculties would do well to educate their president and trustees in the vital necessity of a good library and especially in the importance of the best library staff and service. It has been rather carefully estimated that a thorough study of the problem in a good library prior to and during the prosecution of research on it will save on the average ten percent of the total cost in time and money. It seems certain that

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many institutions committed to research could save money by spending more generously on their libraries."

The committee, in behalf of the staff, earnestly requests that the University take this opportunity to remove all professional positions from Civil Service and to recognize the Library staff as a professional group concerned with the educational program of the University and, therefore, to be classed with the academic rather than the non-academic staff.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee by

Josie B. Houchens,
Chairman, Sub-committee
Lyle S. Bamber
Frank J. Bertalan
Mary Lois Bull
Fanny Dunlap
Lucy V. Kepler
E. W. McDiarmid
Arnold H. Trotier,
Chairman

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